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CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS SUBMITTED BY STATES PARTIES UNDER ARTICLE 18 OF THE CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN

Initial reports of States parties

Corrigendum

ARMENIA

The attached text replaces the text found in CEDAW/C/ARM/1 (Part II), paragraphs 1 to 99.

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Article 1

1. In the Republic of Armenia, there is no discrimination on the basis of social origin, race, nationality, sex, level of education, language, religion, profession, residence, political and other views and other criteria (art. 15 of the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia).

2. In the legislative acts adopted by the Parliament of Armenia, there is no general definition of the expression "discrimination against women". However under the new Constitution the equality of men and women is guaranteed by several provisions.

3. Conventions ratified by the Republic of Armenia are considered superior to national laws; therefore the International Bill of Human Rights and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women guarantee the equality between men and women in Armenia.

4. The Republic of Armenia acceded to the following conventions in the field of advancement of women and protection of women's rights:

- The 1950 Convention on equal pay for work of equal value for men and women;

- The 1958 Discrimination (employment and occupation) Convention;

- The 1957 Convention on the nationality of married women.

5. Currently the Parliament is discussing the ratification of two more international conventions: the 1962 Convention on Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age for Marriage and Registration of Marriage, and the 1952 Convention on the Political Rights of Women.

Article 2

6. The Republic of Armenia regained its independence in 1991, is creating new laws and adopted a new Constitution in 1995. International conventions ratified by the Republic are in force and are considered superior to national laws. International treaties and conventions contradicting the Constitution may be only ratified after making necessary changes to the Constitution.

7. The principle of equality of human rights of men and women is clearly stated in articles 3, 4, 15 and 16 of the Constitution and indirectly implied by a score of others.

8. The Criminal Code of Armenia provides for punishment for the following actions, which are considered as acts of discrimination:

- Forcing a woman to have sexual relations (art. 113);

- Forbidding a woman to get married (art. 118);

- Forcing a woman to perform an abortion (art. 121);

- Refusal of work to a woman on the basis of her pregnancy (art. 139).

9. Men and women enjoy the same rights at work, in both public and private enterprises. They are entitled to equal pay for equal work.

10. The Parliament of the Republic of Armenia does not view the previous laws and regulations of the Republic to be discriminatory against women and thus has not enacted any modifications to them. On 8 July 1991, Parliament adopted a resolution "on urgent measures for the protection of women, maternity and childhood, and the strengthening of the family". Under the resolution, women and mothers have been granted supplementary rights in the fields of work and social security.

11. There is no special institution responsible for the protection of women's rights. However, many public institutions do deal, inter alia, with women's rights and other issues; among these are the Ministry for Social Security and the Centre for Democracy and Human Rights, a national institution founded jointly by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Yerevan State University.

12. Legally, women enjoy full guarantees against discrimination: there are no discriminatory laws, regulations, policies or practices against women. Although a majority of women have received higher education and work in all fields and the percentage of female students has long surpassed that of male students in many fields of study, the unemployment rate among women is higher (67 per cent) than among men. This, however, may be accounted for by the fact that traditionally women are generally more oriented towards children and the family; hence this cannot be viewed as an effect of discrimination.

Article 3

13. The Republic of Armenia is embarked on the course of democratization but is encountering many economic and social difficulties. These, aggravated by the blockade, a drastic decline in living standards during the period of transition, an increase in the unemployment rate, massive impoverishment, etc., have affected the situation of women more than of men. Hence, the Government has taken measures to devote special attention and render social assistance to single mothers, large families and the elderly. The Parliament's above-mentioned resolution "on urgent measures for the protection of women, maternity and childhood, and the strengthening of the family" is meant to address these objectives.

14. In the cultural life of the country women have the same opportunities as men. In a country where culture occupies a central role in society, women are found in this sphere's highest positions. In 1994, out of 29,482 people working in the institutions under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Culture of Armenia (theatres, concert halls, museums, libraries), 19,994 (67.8 per cent) were women. Seven Departments of Culture in the local executive authorities were headed by women.

Article 4

15. Currently, there are a number of special measures in force which have been adopted by the Government to accelerate the de facto equality between men and women. All promotion and advancement mechanisms in the country are available to men and women, with no discrimination and preference. Social affairs departments have been established at different ministries and agencies to see to the social needs of the population, primarily women and children. The Parliament has a permanent Committee on Health and Social Issues, and a Social Policy Department has been established in the Government. Both were headed by women till mid-1996.

16. A national programme of action has been set up and includes the following:

- The publishing and dissemination through the mass media of laws and conventions on the protection of women's rights and the advancement of women;

- Creation of TV and radio programmes to provide information and advice on legal and other aspects of women's rights;

- Establishment of information and legal counselling services;

- Initiation of training sessions on the rights of working women for senior staff in government institutions, enterprises and other organizations.

Special measures have also been adopted to protect motherhood such as the parliamentary resolution mentioned above; see paragraphs 10 and 13.

17. There have been additional modifications to the existing legislation. In 1992, Parliament adopted a decision "on Amendments to the Marriage and Family Code of the Republic of Armenia", which stipulates increases in alimony payments and lowers the marriage age for women from 18 to 17.

Article 5

18. Women are free to choose any profession in the Republic of Armenia. However, in order to safeguard women's health and maternity, they are not allowed to work in positions requiring hard manual labour and on night shifts. Further employment of pregnant women and nursing women under such conditions is prohibited (arts. 184-187 of the Labour Code). However, it is traditional for women also to be responsible for the upbringing of children and housekeeping. This responsibility does not, however, stem from a concept of the superiority or inferiority of either sex, but rather from history and traditions where women enjoy the noble role of mother and all the responsibilities that it entails.

19. The legislation of the Republic of Armenia contains appropriate measures against violations of human rights (which are not divided into women's and men's rights) and physical and moral abuse. In spite of legal norms ensuring the equality of the sexes in employment and social life, men have traditionally been the breadwinner in the family, while women have taken care of the children and

the household. Nevertheless, things have changed and the role of women in supporting the family and in decision-making has increased. The number of families with both spouses working is constantly growing.

20. From 1990 to 1995 the following types of crimes, punished in accordance with articles 112 and 114 of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Armenia, were committed against women:

Type of crime	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
Rape	25	30	20	18	23	17
Forcing to have sexual contact	-	3	5	3	4	9
Sexual contact with persons under 16	12	14	12	5	13	5
Entering into marriage relations with persons under the age permitted for marriage	-	64	61	39	24	21
Forcing a woman to marry or forbidding a woman to get married	71	95	70	82	36	28

The possibility is not excluded, however, that the number of such cases may be higher, since those who suffer assault may not turn for help to the law-enforcement bodies as they would prefer to discuss their case with female personnel.

21. Until recently the percentage of women in both professional and general service categories in the Ministry of Interior did not exceed 5 per cent. However, a certain degree of progress has been observed lately. A road traffic police unit consisting exclusively of women has been already in charge of the traffic in Yerevan for several months and the number of women students enrolling in the Police Academy is constantly increasing.

22. Bride purchase, repudiation of wives and female circumcision are not practised in Armenia and have historically not been a problem for Armenian society.

23. Polygamy is prohibited by law in the Republic of Armenia.

24. A dowry system exists informally in some rural areas and some social groups, but it is not compulsory even for those strata. It operates more in relation to the economic situation, since it is actually viewed as the bride's parents' assistance to the newlyweds, a contribution to the establishment of a new household. On the other hand, the groom's parents often help the young couple by purchasing an apartment, a car, furniture, etc. Many newly married

couples live with the groom's parents, although this may depend either on the tradition or family income.

25. During the Nagorno-Karabakh movement in 1988, and in harshest economic and social conditions of newly achieved independence, Armenian women fought next to the men for survival. Today society devotes more respect and attention towards women, though women, especially mothers, have always enjoyed the highest respect and devotion.

26. The role of the mother in the family is stressed, and maternal leave is mandated by law. Article 5 of the Marriage and Family Code of the Republic of Armenia states that:

> "... the family is under the protection and care of the Government. The state protects the family through establishing maternity homes, nurseries, kindergartens, boarding schools and other children's institutions and organizations; by means of creation and developing consumer services and catering establishments, by rendering financial assistance in the form of child allowances to mothers with many children and single mothers, as well as by providing them with other privileges and aid."
>
> "Maternity in Armenia is subject to the special care of the State. Special measures are taken to allow women to combine work and motherhood, taking into consideration the woman's health and the interest of the mother and child. All the conditions shall be provided in the Republic for working mothers to protect their rights, to give material and moral support to mothers and children, including paid holidays for pregnancy and childbirth."

27. A women's health centre has been established at Erebouny Hospital in Yerevan. Under the patronage of the First Lady, it is fully equipped with the most modern equipment. A major centre for prenatal care has been established at another hospital.

28. There are more than 30 women's organizations in the Republic which promote the political, social and cultural rights of women. Some of those organizations are professional and gather together women scientists, artists, journalists and entrepreneurs. Others are engaged in social and political activities: environmental protection, protection of motherhood, childhood and gender equality. There are also international Armenian women's organizations that include representatives of the Armenian Diaspora. To enhance women's active participation in society, the non-governmental Armenian Women's Council established a School for Women Leaders in 1994. The school has the objective of preparing girls and young women for future careers and high positions in society.

29. Among women's organizations, the non-governmental political organization "Shamiram" won eight seats in the parliamentary elections of 1995 and became the second-largest faction in Parliament. There are currently 12 women parliamentarians in the National Assembly of Armenia. Though this number is considerably smaller than that of the female members of the Supreme Council of Soviet Armenia, these MPs, unlike their Soviet counterparts, are really engaged

in the legislative process and are not only formally registered as such for the sake of making the statistics look more "democratic", as used to be the case.

30. Among the most important women's non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are: the All Armenian Women, the Republican Council for Women, the Armenian Intellectual Woman, "Mariam" Armenian Women's Association, "Ghevond Alishan", Armenian Humanitarian Cross, Hayouhi, etc. Women's rights are also promoted by some periodicals, such as Asghadavarouhi (Working Women), Man and Women, Family, Karine, which cover various issues, among them the advancement of women and obstacles to its achievement. There are also several TV and radio programmes on family and women's issues, including: "Hasmik", "Women's TV", "Armenian House".

31. In October 1994, Armenian women's NGOs organized an international conference on "Women on the Eve of the Twenty-first Century". The main theme of the conference, that women's rights are human rights, was later stated by the delegation of Armenia from the podium of the Fourth World Conference on Women, held at Beijing in September 1995, as an official approach to the problem.

32. In 1994, the Armenian National Commission for UNESCO organized a seminar on "The Situation of Women in the Countries of the Former Soviet Union". During the seminar delegates from the former Soviet Republics stated that the situation in their countries was almost identical: certainly there existed problems for women, but they could not be solved in isolation from other problems of society.

Article 6

33. In the Republic of Armenia, the literacy rate is 98 per cent and women have the same rights as men to education. All schools are coeducational except for a recently established lycée, which is exclusively for women. Women have the same employment opportunities as men.

34. The traffic of women and prostitution are prohibited in the Republic of Armenia. There are articles in the Criminal Code dealing specifically with the traffic of women. According to article 179 of the Code, the penalty for prostitution is a warning and a fine ranging from 50 per cent to 100 per cent of the minimum wage. The penalty for running a brothel is up to five years' imprisonment and the confiscation of one's property. The increase in prostitution may be attributed to the deteriorated economic situation. However, owing to the traditionally negative attitude towards prostitution and its public condemnation by society, prostitution has not been a major problem in Armenia and there is no sex tourism.

35. There have been no reported cases of rape of prostitutes.

Article 7

36. Women are on equal terms with men, and enjoy both the right to vote and to be elected to all public positions. This right is guaranteed by articles 27 and 64 of the Constitution and article 133 of the Penal Code:

- Article 3 of the Constitution states: "The elections for the President, National Assembly and the local self-governing bodies of

the Republic of Armenia, as well as referendums, are held based on the right to universal, equal and direct suffrage by secret ballot";

- Article 133 of the Penal Code states: "The violation of the electoral right of citizens by use of violence, threat, deception or bribery is punishable by one to two years' imprisonment or two years of community service."

37. There is no discrimination against women whatsoever in the legislation of the Republic of Armenia. This holds as well for the right to occupy government posts, perform other governmental functions, as well as participate in non-governmental organizations concerned with the political and public life of the country. However, in reality, although the number of women working in government, Parliament and other administrative bodies is quite high, there are fewer women than men holding high-level positions.

The Parliament of Armenia

Members of Parliament	1980	1985	1994	1995/96
Women	121	121	9	12
Men	219	219	240	178

38. From 1991 to 1994 there was only 1 woman minister out of 22, and only 3 women deputy ministers. Of 21 State Departments 4 were headed by women, and heads of only 2 government agencies out of 31 had women deputies. However, the number of women in the middle echelons of the Government is higher. This is especially true for the spheres of culture, science, education and health, where women make up 31 per cent of the staff. Currently, of 23 ministries only 1, the Ministry of Social Security, is headed by a woman minister.

Participation in power at the highest levels (1994)

	Women	Men
Highest level (Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister, State Minister, Minister, Deputy Ministers, head of department and agencies)	16 (5% of the total)	304
Middle level (staff of ministries, government departments and agencies)		
Economy	1 248 (46.8%)	2 629
Judicial system	216 (22.7%)	737
Science, culture, education, health, media	3 998 (81.1%)	4 928

39. The percentage of women in the executive branch at the highest level is only 5 per cent. Although it has been impossible to retrieve data for 1980 and 1985, rough estimates show that during those years the percentage of women in the highest echelons of the Government did not exceed 8 per cent to 10 per cent. On average, the proportion of women involved in the middle and lower echelons of the Government of Armenia was 36.8 per cent in 1994. In the same period, women in local self-government bodies of Armenia constituted 41 per cent in Yerevan, 42 per cent in other towns and villages and 47 per cent as public notaries and in local bar associations.

Staff of the Public Prosecutor's Office of the Republic of Armenia

	1980-1985	1994	1995/96
Women	143	150	42%
Men	560	573	58%

These figures include women with a degree in legal sciences who work as heads of departments, judges and senior advisers. The remaining 134 are support personnel-accountants, heads of offices, typists, cleaners and couriers.

40. Gender restrictions regarding the above-mentioned posts have not been observed and no quotas have been ever set for women employees or appointees.

Article 8

41. Since its Declaration of Independence in 1991, the Republic of Armenia has become a full member of the international community. Armenia has established about 30 representations in other countries and at international organizations; however, the number of representatives must still grow. Women constitute 21 per cent of the diplomats working for the Foreign Ministry. Among diplomats serving at embassies and representations of Armenia abroad, 27 per cent are women. The number of women who are members or heads of official delegations to international meetings and conferences is steadily increasing. Currently there are no data available on the number of citizens of the Republic of Armenia working within the United Nations system and regional organizations.

Article 9

42. Issues concerning citizenship are addressed in the following provisions of the Law of the Republic of Armenia on Citizenship:

- Article 3, paragraph 2: "The citizens of the Republic of Armenia are equal before the law irrespective of the procedure by which the citizenship has been gained, irrespective of nationality, race, sex, language, faith, political or other views, or social origin, and have

the same rights, freedoms and responsibilities envisaged by laws and the Constitution";

- Article 6: "The marriage of a woman who is a citizen of the Republic of Armenia to an alien does not automatically change her citizenship, and vice versa."

43. According to article 11:

"A child obtains citizenship of Armenia irrespective of the place of its birth if its parents are citizens of Armenia. If one of the parents of the child is an alien and the other is a citizen of the Republic of Armenia, the citizenship is determined by the parents' written agreement.

"In case of the absence of such agreement the child obtains Armenian citizenship if it is born in Armenia; or in case of not obtaining Armenian citizenship the child remains without citizenship. In case its parents permanently reside in the Republic of Armenia, the child obtains Armenian citizenship. If one of the parents of the child is a citizen of Armenia and the other is unknown or has no citizenship, the child becomes a citizen of Armenia."

Thus, in granting citizenship, the law does not set priorities in terms of the citizenship of either parent. Mothers can confer their nationality on their children on an equal footing. Minors can travel on the passports of both parents.

44. A woman may obtain a passport without obtaining the permission of her spouse or anyone else. Neither is the permission of her husband required for a woman to travel outside the country.

Article 10

45. In the Republic of Armenia women and men have equal rights in the field of education. Women outnumber men in institutions of higher education and women have the same opportunities in choosing careers.

46. All seven-year-old children (boys and girls) have the right to enter the first grade of coeducational public schools. Subjects offered to all students in higher grades include the humanities, physics, mathematics, economics, biology, chemistry, vocational and agricultural fields. The State supports all public schools; however, proposals for the establishment of private secondary institutions are also under discussion by the Ministry of Education. Those who do not continue past the eighth grade receive a school-leaving certificate. Those who finish secondary school receive a certificate which notes their educational level and their grades and is the prerequisite for entering institutions of higher learning. Education until the eighth grade is compulsory in the Republic of Armenia. As of 1996, there were 1,385 schools in Armenia.

47. The overall literacy rate as of 1995 is 98 per cent. Information is not available on the proportion of the total 2 per cent of the illiterate population

that are women. Precise data on the school drop-out rates of girls vs. boys are not available either; however, the drop-out rate is close to zero.

48. Assistance to children from low-income and poor families is organized based on appeals by parents and by special decisions of the School Executive Committees. Lack of heating in winter has caused the interruption of education process at schools and universities (at least for three months). This, together with the energy crises, is now being overcome. High fees and irregular schedules of public transportation have contributed to lower attendance rates. Public transportation costs have now stabilized but still remain high, although students receive a discount for their monthly tickets. Many of the country's economic difficulties resulting in the deterioration of education and science still remain. In spite of all these mentioned difficulties, students continue to attend schools and universities. In 1994, the State budget allotment for education was only 4.5 per cent; in 1995 it was 4.7 per cent.

49. In 1993, there were 20 private universities, institutes and colleges in Armenia, with a total of 8,797 students, representing 14.6 per cent of the total number of students in the country. There are currently 70 private educational institutions in Armenia, all licensed by the Government. Enrolment is over 20,000, of which more than half of the students are women. The percentage of female students in State-sponsored institutions of higher learning (with a significantly larger enrolment) is similarly higher than that of males.

50. There are no quotas for women in the areas of school enrolment or scholarship allocation.

51. Among traditionally "female" fields are health care, where women constituted 90 per cent of the students (1994); and education and the arts, where they made up 78.9 per cent of the students (1994). However, their number is also significant in the fields of economics (41.9 per cent as of 1994) and industry, transportation and communications (about 40 per cent). The country has world-renowned women artists, singers, poets, writers and actresses. During recent years there has been a significant increase in women students in the field of radio-electronics, computer sciences, chemistry, as well as the new fields of management, banking, marketing, international relations and international law.

Percentage of teachers at institutions of secondary education

(by gender)

	1980		1985		1994	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Primary School (1-3 classes)	11.3	88.7	7.6	92.4	5.3	94.7
Secondary School (4-10 classes)	31.5	68.5	29.1	70.5	21.3	78.7

Number of women in institutions of higher education

	Total number of employees	Women	Per cent
1980	58 100	28 100	48
1985	34 849	29 454	53.70
1990	68 397	31 417	45.93
1994	46 507	24 230	52.10

Number of women in science as of 1993

	1993		1995	
Organization	Total number of employees	Women (per cent)	Total number of employees	Women (per cent)
Research institutions	24 260	12 300 (50.7)	15 040	6 700 (44.5)
National Academy	6 886	3 171 (51.8)	4 776	2 398 (50.2)

Number of students graduated

(by gender and field of specialization)

	Year					
	1980		1985		1994	
Field of specialization	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Technical (engineering and science)	760	3 040	860	3 440	840	860
Economics	320	480	360	540	400	700
Pedagogics	1 000	400	1 000	200	800	100
Health	350	400	500	100	300	40
Foreign languages	130	130	140	140	[a]	[a]
Music, Arts	200	400	300	500	200	400
Agriculture	60	340	60	340	300	100
Veterinary medicine	270	130	350	150	600	150
Sports and public health	100	200	100	200	100	200

[a] Not available, although women prevail in this field (women constitute about 90 per cent of students studying foreign/European languages and about half of the students studying Oriental languages).

From 1980 to 1989, there were 12,300 (50.7 per cent) women out of a total of 24,260 individuals in the research institutions. At the Academy of Sciences there were 3,171 women out of a total of 6,886. Of these, 532 women were candidates in sciences, 47 were doctors and 5 were members of the Academy. Armenia is the fourth largest Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) recipient of scientific grants from the Soros Foundation. In 1995, 97 grants (21 per cent) out of a total of 456 to Armenian scientists, were received by women.

52. Education abroad has also become available since the democratization of the country. Today, 50 per cent of the young people studying abroad are women.

53. The Armenian National Commission for UNESCO has submitted to the UNESCO headquarters in 1994 a report on the national education strategy. This official policy paper of the Government of Armenia on education reform will serve as a basis for a plan of action to transform the Armenian system into the Western (basically European) educational system. The document focuses also on the participation of women in the education process.

Article 11

54. Every citizen has the right to free choice of employment. Everyone has the right to a just wage no lower than the minimum set by the State and to working conditions meeting safety and health requirements (art. 29 of the Labour Code); men and women enjoy the same rights in this sphere as well (art. 14). Women receive the same wages as men for the same work and are entitled to equal advancement opportunities (art. 83). Employers are forbidden to refuse to hire, or to fire, women on the grounds of pregnancy or maternity (art. 197 of the Labour Code). In the 1970s, the proportion of women among workers and administrative staff was 41 per cent; in 1980 it was 46 per cent; and in 1989 48 per cent.

Employment by spheres[a]

	1980		1985		1993		1995	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
TOTAL	551 421	660 746	648 601	732 123	440 433	465 953	248 068	167 692
	45.5%	54.5%	46.9%	53.1%	48.6%	51.4%	59.6%	50.4%
Industry	349 314	516 980	414 622	564 952	213 716	338 295	129 927	116 615
	40.3%	59.7%	42.3%	57.7%	38.7%	61.3%	52.7%	47.3%
Culture education	202 107	143 766	233 979	167 171	226 717	127 658	118 141	51 077
	58.4%	41.6%	58.3%	41.7%	63.9%	36.1%	69.8%	30.2%

Source: State Statistics Administration.

[a] This table does not include agriculture, trade and services, as well as the number of those who emigrated from Armenia in 1992-1994, a figure especially difficult to estimate.

55. Women are considered equal to men in their right to social security, health protection as well as other rights. It is prohibited by law to fire a pregnant woman or to transfer her to a lower-paid job without her agreement (art. 197 of the Labour Code).

56. A mother receives 70 days' paid leave before the child's birth and is entitled to two years' maternity leave as well as a number of other privileges (arts. 189-193 of the Labour Code and Supreme Council resolution 267). The State supports many aspects of maternity; it subsidizes vouchers for holiday homes, rest houses for pregnant women, extra vacations for women having children; it creates opportunities to work according to a schedule convenient to the mother; and allows regular rest breaks at work. All these privileges and social guarantees are listed in articles 193 to 196 and 264 to 265 of the Labour Code of the Republic of Armenia.

57. The former Soviet Union created an extensive social safety net/system of welfare and allowances, which was inherited, among other current CIS States, by Armenia. Kindergartens and a wide range of other institutions provide care for children and assist in their upbringing. Payments are reduced for families with many children and low income. This system covers 641,852 elderly pensioners (of whom 352,700 are women), 1,132,400 adolescents, 19,283 single mothers, thousands of orphans and disabled from the 1988 earthquake, and other vulnerable population groups. Falling under this category also are the 152,636 unemployed who lost their jobs in the transition to a free market economy (source: State Statistics Administration).

58. During 1993-1994, per capita income decreased drastically, and today the majority of the population exists below the poverty line. About 90 per cent of per capita income is spent on basic commodities - primarily food and communal services. However, a minimum salary is hardly enough to cover even such a limited basket. Many people have to rely on savings and sell family belongings. Although the decline in the economy has halted since 1995 and some growth has been observed, with income also increasing, the living standard is still far from sufficient. The newly established market relations are contributing to the obvious stratification of the society into layers with clearly demarcated high and low income levels.

59. There are 19,283 single mothers in Armenia. The greater number of these inhabit urban areas, about 40 per cent of them living in the city of Yerevan alone. The number of children in these families is 21,996 (source: State Statistics Administration). The proportion of single mothers with one child is 86 per cent; with two or more 14 per cent.

60. Owing to a lack of financial resources, many child care facilities are not in operation, thus aggravating the conditions of working mothers and families in general. In 1994, the child care facilities were attended by 104,056 children, while their actual capacity was 145,618.

61. As a rule, women refugees are always in the most difficult situation. For five days in January of 1990, the Armenian community of Baku, the capital of Azerbaijan, were killed, tortured, robbed and humiliated. Pregnant women and babies were molested, little girls were raped in front of their parents' eyes,

Christian crosses were burned on their backs, and they were abused for their Christian faith.

62. In 1993, the refugees, migrants and internally displaced Armenians constituted 14 per cent of the entire population of Armenia (418,000 persons). Of these, 55 per cent were women. About 1 million persons, or 30 per cent of the population of the country, did not have shelter; of these 514,000 lived in the disaster area. However, many of these refugees have since migrated to other countries, and these figures are subject to further verification.

63. According to various investigators, refugee women live in conditions that are more difficult than those of men living in similar situations. For example, the number of people living in extreme poverty is significantly higher in the rural areas. This is mainly attributable to the fact that the majority of women refugees are unaccustomed to rural life; they face such difficulties as lack of fuel and basic facilities, and are unaccustomed to working on the land.

64. A national programme for the social and economic integration of refugees is being implemented by the Government of Armenia. This programme will afford a solution to the shelter, employment and social issues of refugees and the displaced within the next five years. The most vulnerable refugees receive assistance from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the World Food Programme (WFP), the International Committee of the Red Cross, the International Federation of the Red Cross, the European Community Humanitarian Office, the United States Government and other organizations.

65. The number of unemployed women in the Republic of Armenia was estimated in May 1994 by the Centre of Employment at 69,615. Of these, 3,399 had children under two years of age, 1,745 had three or more children and 107 were handicapped. Women constituted 63.9 per cent of the unemployed urban population. The unemployment rate in the rural areas was significantly lower: 15,990, of which 8,379, or 52.4 per cent, were women. As of 1995, of the 152,636 unemployed registered at the Centre for Employment, 109,232 were women.

66. In 1993, the Government of Armenia adopted a decision on "Payment of a Monthly Allowance to People with the Status of Unemployed and Mothers with Children under Two Years of Age". As of 1996, for each child under the age of six, parents received 1,200 drams (US$ 2.6), regardless of their employment status. The unemployment allowance is 1,300 drams (US$ 2.8). All jobless persons receive state support and are referred to jobs where such possibilities exist. The international community and Armenians of the Diaspora have assisted unemployed women and poor families.

67. There is no specific law concerning women working in agriculture. Women in this area enjoy the same benefits as other women in society. Though the privatization of the land has notably increased the workload of every rural dweller, after the closing of many factories and enterprises in rural areas, many professional staff - engineers, technicians, accountants - were laid off.

Article 12

68. A wide range of medical services is organized to address the problems of maternal care. There are local services, maternity hospitals and hospitals with maternity wards. Leave is granted during pregnancy and after birth (the duration of this leave was recently lengthened to 140 days). Medical assistance for children as well as for mothers is regulated by the State and is accessible by the entire population.

69. In the triennium 1987-1989 the maternal mortality ratio was 40.0 and in the following triennium (1990-1992) it had dropped to 38.5. The fertility rate increased from 2.3 children per woman in 1980 to 2.57 in 1991. Although fertility is still increasing, the rate of increase has obviously declined.

Year	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
Thousand persons	74.400	73.400	17.900	13.200	12.900

A study of over 4,000 randomly selected women of child-bearing age in Yerevan between 1989 and 1991 revealed very high secondary infertility rates; 21.4 per cent of the women sampled had experienced primary infertility.

70. In 1992, the following rate of contraceptive use was reported: pill: 1.6 per cent; diaphragm: 0.08 per cent; never used any means of contraception: 33 per cent. Abortions are not prohibited in Armenia. However, they are permitted only until the fourteenth week of pregnancy, in order not to endanger the woman's life. Physicians performing illegal abortions are sentenced to two years of forced labour, fined and may be deprived of the right to practice for up to three years. People performing an abortion and without a medical degree are sentenced to three years' imprisonment or one to two years' forced labour. In the case of several instances of the above-mentioned infractions or if one of them has resulted in the death of the patient, the sentence is eight years' imprisonment (art. 120 of the Criminal Code). Forcing a woman to perform an abortion is punishable by a year's imprisonment or forced labour, or public condemnation (art. 121 of the Criminal Code).

71. Officially the number of abortions was 2.7 per woman in 1994. But in reality abortion is the primary method of birth control in Armenia. In 1992, the ratio of known abortions to live births was 405 per 1,000 (or 1 abortion for every 2.5 births). While this ratio is higher than in the Western European States, it is one of the lowest among the newly independent States.

72. According to available statistics on anaemia in pregnant women in Armenia, there has been a considerable increase in both attendance at clinics for anaemic women and the incidence of anaemia among women over the past three years. The rates for the latter in Armenia were 24.6 per cent in 1990.

73. The Ministry of Health with the assistance of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has identified the following problems concerning women's health:

- Defective prenatal health services, for instance, the absence of prenatal control in women's consultation services;
- Deficient breastfeeding;
- Virtual absence of family planning services and supply of effective contraceptives (frequent abortions, used as the principal means of birth control, result in infertility among women);
- Nutritional deficiencies and related conditions in pregnant women and young mothers, including iron deficiency anaemia.

74. One of the more serious problems in Armenia is the lack of family planning services. The Ministry of Health is now working to establish these services and has instituted a new project to improve prenatal services. Termination of pregnancy as a means of birth control is a common practice. The Ministry of Health obtains contraceptives with the assistance of different international organizations. It also provides hospitals with the necessary information regarding the advantages of using these contraceptives. The development of an artificial insemination centre and the use of the laporoscopic method in gynaecology are new steps in the development of Armenia's family planning services.

75. The Ministry of Health has instituted a programme for combating HIV/AIDS. During the past five years no cases of HIV/AIDS have been reported among pregnant women.

76. Today, women work without obstacles in all medical fields and professions and occupy high-ranking positions within those professions. In 1996, 13.5 per cent of the government budget was allocated to health care. This is a high rate internationally and reflects the emphasis placed upon this sphere by the Government.

77. Female circumcision has never been practised in Armenia.

78. Statistics on the number of teenage pregnancies and the age brackets of teenage mothers are not available.

79. The mortality rate for infants under 1 year is 12.8 per cent. This rate has recently decreased as shown below:

Year	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
For every 1,000 births	18.5	17.9	18.5	17.08	14.7	12.8

The mortality rate for children from one to five has fluctuated over the same period as follows:

Year	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
For every 1,000 births	23.8	22.6	24.2	24.2	21.4	20.3

The average number of children in families is 2.2.

80. There are no accurate data on drug addiction among women.

Article 13

81. Since October 1993, a new network of social services has been in place in Armenia, with the objective of providing assistance especially to persons with low income and to poor families, regardless of gender. In 1994, there were 65 such services in the Republic of Armenia which distributed humanitarian assistance to different social groups, provided family support and took care of single elderly persons and the handicapped. Social assistance is provided to families regardless of sex, nationality or religion.

82. Of the nearly 95,000 handicapped in Armenia (most became handicapped as a result of the earthquake in 1988), nearly 40,000 are women. Single elderly persons and the handicapped are full wards of the State. Single mothers and mothers with many children enjoy the same privileges: rights to apartments, furniture, vouchers and the right to obtain credits from the State.

83. Pregnant women and women with children under one year of age cannot be sentenced to death. In some cases sentences of imprisonment for women can be changed to a conditional sentence.

84. Women enjoy equal rights with men in obtaining family benefits, bank loans, mortgages and other forms of financial credit.

85. Women enjoy equality with men in cultural life, including sports, in recreational activities and elsewhere. They occupy an important place in the cultural life of the Republic of Armenia. There are well-known women academicians, musicians, dancers, painters, writers and chess players.

Article 14

86. Women as well as men are entitled to own land. Problems arising from women working in rural areas are dealt with in the general context of society's problems. There are no separate or specific rules or regulations concerning women in rural areas. Currently, the new social services which extend throughout all regions of the Republic pay much needed attention to problems of the family and to the improvement of the social position of women within the family. The Ministry of Health, in cooperation with UNICEF and the World Health Organization (WHO), has developed a project to improve women's health in rural

areas. Statistics are unavailable on the percentage of women in agriculture and on the difference in the rate of progress of women in urban vs. rural environments.

87. In 1991-1992, Armenia carried out a land privatization programme involving the creation of 304,000 (302,400 individual and 1,600 collective) private farms. Land was distributed according to household, with equal ownership rights for households headed either by men or women.

Article 15

88. According to the legislation of the Republic of Armenia, women and men enjoy equal rights in both criminal and civil trials (art. 8 of the criminal Procedure Code; art. 5 of the Civil Procedure Code):

- Article 8 of the Criminal Procedure Code states:

"Justice is dispensed in criminal cases and tribunals on the basis of equality of citizens before the law, without taking into consideration the origin, social class, property, race, nationality, sex, education, language, religious beliefs, profession, residence and other criteria of the parties involved."

- Article 5 of the Civil Procedure Code states:

"Justice is dispensed in civil cases only by tribunals and on the basis of equality of citizens before the law without taking into consideration the origin, social class, property, race, nationality, sex, education, language, religious beliefs, profession, residence and other criteria of the parties involved."

89. Women in Armenia enjoy equal real estate ownership and other property rights. According to article 3 of the Family and Marriage Code, husbands and wives possess equal personal property rights. Women are on equal terms with men and have the right to enter contractual relations alone in their own right. A woman can use her hame for these purposes, without the requirement of second persons, or collateral persons, as beneficiary or dependant, except for property obtained during the common life of the spouses that belongs equally to both members of the couple.

90. As of 1 November 1996, 336 persons have been licensed by the Ministry of Justice to engage in the practice of law. Of these, 74 are women. Of the 72 public notaries in the Republic, 41 are women. By 12 January and 1 April 1996 decrees of the President of the Republic of Armenia, 94 judges were appointed. Of these, 25 are women, the youngest being 30 years old, and the oldest, 57. Of the 6,825 elected jurors, 3,228 are women. There are no restrictions for women to serve on juries and to testify as witnesses.

91. Men and women have equal rights relating to the movement of persons and the freedom to choose their residence and domicile.

Article 16

92. In the Republic of Armenia, spouses have equal rights in entering into a marriage, during the marriage and at its dissolution. However, during a divorce, the interests of the children, if there are any, are considered paramount. Rights and obligations concerning marriage and family relations are codified in the Family and Marriage Code of the Republic of Armenia.

93. According to article 1 of the Family and Marriage Code, the Code's purpose is to contribute to the building of family relations based on the free and full consent of the spouses, free of any financial motivation, on the basis of love and respect. Marriages may be conducted only by mutual consent (art. 14) and after the parties have reached the legal age of marriage (art. 15), which is 17 years for women.

94. Marriage is considered legal only if it is registered with the relevant public institution (art. 6 of the Family and Marriage Code).

95. Citizens have equal rights in family relations without any consideration of origin, social condition, race, nationality, sex, education, language, religious beliefs and residence (art. 4).

96. During marriage each spouse has the right to keep his/her name, or to choose the name of the other spouse (art. 18).

97. During their common life, decisions on matters relating to the children are taken equally by both spouses. Each spouse has the right to choose his or her profession, workplace and residence (art. 19).

98. In case of divorce the common property is divided equally between the spouses; however, certain privileges are granted to the spouse who is to take care of the children. Parents, irrespective of gender, have to pay alimony for children if they are not in their custody after divorce. The amount of the alimony depends upon the income of the parent (art. 21).

99. The betrothal and the marriage of a child do not have any legal effect. The minimum age for marriage as determined under the relevant legislation is 17, but in exceptional cases this can be reduced by one year for women (art. 15).

100. Polygamy is prohibited by law (art. 123 of the Criminal Code) and is punished by up to three years' imprisonment or up to a year's forced labour.

101. Women have equal rights with men to initiate divorce proceedings, to remarry and to retain custody of children and receive child support.